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## Proceedings of the Club

TUESDAY EVENING, DEC. 12, 1899

President Brown in the chair, 33 persons present. Two new members were elected. Dr. D. T. MacDougal, Botanical Garden, N. Y., and Miss Anna F. Thompson, Summit, N. J.

The scientific program was opened by a paper by Dr. L. M. Underwood, "On the Genera of the Schizaeaceae."

Dr. Underwood explained the peculiar characters of the sporangium by which the Schizaeaceae are distinguished, illustrating with figures, and then sketching the history of the order. Linnaeus put its species under *Acrostichum* and *Osmunda*; Richard was the first to begin segregation, erecting in 1792, the genus *Lophidium*. In 1793, *Schizaea* was founded by Smith on a South African plant common through the Transvaal region, quite similar to our own species of New Jersey. Wallich founded another genus, *Actinostachys*, in 1822, on an East Indian form. Dr. Underwood considered these three genera to be valid, though recent German systematists, as Prantl, have not recognized them.

Swartz constituted another genus in 1800, *Mohria*, from Cape Colony, of which only one species is known. *Lygodium*, our best known genus, was established by Swartz in 1800, and includes one well-known Atlantic species, *L. palmatum*, the Climbing-fern.

Several other genera, as *Anemia* and *Trochopteris*, were discussed, with remarks on principal species. About 90 species of the order have been published, largely American and tropical, especially the abundant Brazilian forms of *Anemia* and allies.

Professor Lloyd suggested the interest attaching to *Trochopteris* as possibly a very primitive form.

Dr. Underwood said it is sparsely represented from Brazilian collections, perhaps because of its small size and habit of growth close to the ground, the largest specimen known being only three inches in diameter.

The second paper was by Dr. D. T. MacDougal, "Studies on *Hexalectris*." This rare Southern orchid is of great interest on

account of its supposed near relationship to *Corallorhiza*, which develops short coralloid outgrowths without roots, but producing a mycorrhiza and sending out hyphae into the soil. Material of *Hexalectris* from Alabama, although possessed of somewhat similar coralloid growths, was found to contain no fungi, and to be without apparent adaptation to growth by mycorrhiza. No one seems to have seen the roots of this plant.

The third paper was by Dr. N. L. Britton, "Notes on Species of *Crataegus*."

Dr. Britton exhibited and discussed 34 species of the northeastern United States, and remarked upon the great need of persistent field-study in determining this genus. One must have flowers, mature leaves and mature fruit from any individual bush before he can begin to find its relationship to any other form. The most difficult part of the genus is perhaps the *C. tomentosa* group. Many southern species have recently been found to extend their range into Virginia, as *C. Chapmani*, *C. Carolina*, etc.; and others into Missouri, as *C. berberifolia*. The identity of the original of *C. coccinea* of Linnaeus proves to have a special local interest. Linnaeus seems to have had, as often, no specimen before him, but based his description on a plate of Plunkenet and another of Ray. Few herbarium specimens correspond well to the figure, which answers only to leaves of a shrub collected twice near New York, once by Mr. E. P. Bicknell along the Harlem River, and once by the late Professor E. H. Day on Persimmon Island, near New Rochelle, N. Y. The leaves bear a remarkable resemblance to those of *Betula nigra*. Search for similar specimens near New York should be made; the leaves are longer, and with blunter, shallower lobes than in the commonly-received *C. coccinea*.

Dr. Britton is endeavoring to get together at the Botanical Garden a collection of these species, and has now a dozen or more; but the wild stock is very difficult to grow and is impatient of transplanting. Most gardeners graft or grow from seed.

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*Secretary.*